

35. (New) A method of forming a silicon-carbide item, the method comprising:
- (a) forming a preform from wood, then
 - (b) heating the preform under pressure to a first temperature in an autoclave, the step of heating the preform under pressure including the steps of covering the preform with a vacuum bag, evacuating air from the bag, then heating the preform and vacuum bag to a drying temperature lower than the first temperature, then removing the vacuum bag and heating the preform to the first temperature, then
 - (c) heating the preform to a second temperature in a furnace at atmospheric pressure to pyrolyze the preform, the second temperature being higher than the first temperature; and then
 - (d) infusing the preform with a liquid containing silicon for forming a silicon-carbide item that retains the shape of the preform.

REMARKS

As an initial matter, Applicants have amended Claims 1-2, 14-15, and 26-27 without prejudice solely for the purpose of addressing the minor 35 U.S.C. § 112 concerns expressed by the Examiner in the Official Action (paragraph 1) and for no purposes related to patentability or cited art. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication in the Official Action (paragraph 6) that Claims 14 and 26 would be allowable if the 35 U.S.C. § 112 concerns set forth above were addressed. Applicants respectfully submit that such concerns have been addressed and that Claims 14 and 26 are in condition for allowance. Applicants also thank the Examiner for the indication in the Official Action (paragraph 7) that Claims 13, 15-25, and 27-34 would likewise be allowable if the 35 U.S.C. § 112 concerns were addressed and Claim 13 was rewritten in independent form to include the base independent Claim 1 and the dependent Claim 13. Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. § 112 concerns have been addressed so that Claims 15-25 and 27-34 are in condition for allowance. New independent Claim 35 has been added which includes the features from original Claim 1 and original Claim 13 with the 35 U.S.C. § 112 concerns addressed, and new Claim 35 should be in condition for allowance as well. Applicants further have amended Claims 2, 4-6, 10-11, and 13 without prejudice to further claim the invention. These amendments are fully supported in the specification and drawings as originally filed, and no new matter has been added.